In the knowledge of limits and relationships man discovers the eternal self, thenceforth to move with obedience and discipline in full freedom. —HENRY MILLER

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THE PRESSURES OF ENVIRONMENT

IN past ages, the occasions for reform or revolution were made by the dramatic contrast of what was with what, as all or many saw, ought to be. In the eighteenth century, men broke out of the hereditary confinements of their rights, urged on by lucid definitions of the conditions of a politically free society. The watchwords, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, represented goals which all could understand, and the barriers to their realization were even easier to point out and attack.

Today, however, the issues of the moral struggle have become internalized. Men look anxiously for a political or a circumstantial solution of their problems, but do not find it. It is no longer possible to localize the source of the oppressions they feel in a social class or a group such as an opposing nation. The familiar leverage which arouses men to action, as in the case of clearly defined evil-doers, is not available.

Already the intuitive and perceptive members of modern society have made this discovery. The most searching documents of the time are works which investigate the nature of man, not those which hope to ease the burdens of the technological age by rearranging the balance of its centers of power. It is as though, after centuries of addressing themselves to historical and political situations, the thinkers who represent the forward current of history are now holding dialogue with themselves.

This change in the focus of intellectual and moral concentration

is entirely consistent with the Theosophical teachings on evolution. It bears out the prediction, made by H. P. Blavatsky, that the twentieth century would witness a further incarnation of Manas—a heightening of intuitive perception, and an increase in the human capacity for synthesis in thought. There are of course concomitants of a less attractive description. Divorced from the creative energies which are moving on to higher plateaus of activity, the old patterns of existence are left with only the impulse of habit to maintain them. The institutions inherited from the past are not without resemblance to massive kama-rupic shells, kept in mechanical being by the collective *Tanha* of the lower psychic principles. So, in the very period of history when mankind begins to feel the thrusting strength of the onward flow of evolution, the obstacles presented by Karma take on a stolid weight that they did not have in the past, when those institutions were in process of formation. The pioneer spirit, indeed, creates atavistic forms of existence, simply by showing the great contrast between its intentions and what it would change or abandon. "Look not behind or thou art lost" is an expression that clearly applies here.

What are the precipitating factors of change? They have *been* dramatic instances of injustice. The American colonists found the policies of George II intolerable. Oppressive taxation and other restrictive measures finally turned the minds of even conservative individuals toward thoughts of freedom and revolution. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a book which aroused sympathy for the Negro slaves, throughout the North, dramatizing the need for change. Today, a widely published photograph of a police dog biting a Negro woman demonstrator in the South has had an effect electrifying to public opinion.

But these are all the old sort of precipitants, calling for action in relation to external problems and situations. They make us want to change a law or reorganize a government. The question that needs answering is: What will make us want to change ourselves?

Are there happenings which have a tendency to produce this result? It is a question whether "happenings" is the appropriate word, in this case. The need, perhaps, is for circumstances which are seen to offer no basis for manipulation as a means of obtaining desired results. When old forms of action are no longer fruitful, when once pleasurable sensations no longer delight, when the "things" we

have are not what we want, nor any "thing" can contribute to the meanings we seek—then is the individual ready to interrogate himself.

This sort of environment, it had best be admitted, has no precise definition in material terms. Nor can it be described by social or political relationships. The controlling reality of this environment is in fact subjective, requiring the presence of an inward standard of values. It is the flow of consciousness, not the flow of history, that brings the confrontation of man with himself. Hence, no doubt, the obscurity of the present, so far as hopeful signs of change are concerned. The signs are for the most part still hidden inside human beings—in the silent questionings, the growing doubts, and the as yet still undisciplined wonderings that take possession of the mind at odd hours.

At this time it seems possible to say only that the cycle itself will play a major part in creating the sensed need for the changes that are to come. Which is a way of suggesting that, more and more, the inner lives of men will constitute their true environment. And the awakening will come out of a recognition of this functioning aspect of the Law of Karma.

Twentieth Century Predicament

The development of man in the last four thousand years of history is truly awe-inspiring. He has developed his reason to a point where he is solving the riddles of nature, and has emancipated himself from the blind power of the natural forces. But at the very moment of his greatest triumph, when he is at the threshold of a new world, he has succumbed to the power of the very things and organizations he has created. He has invented a new method of producing, and has made production and distribution his new idol. He worships the work of his hands and has reduced himself to being the servant of things. He uses the name of God, of freedom, of humanity, of socialism, in vain, he prides himself on his powers—the bombs and the machines—to cover up his human bankruptcy; he boasts of his power to destroy in order to hide his human impotence.

—Erich Fromm

MISUNDERSTOOD BIBLICAL TRADITIONS

Fear of God

I

BECAUSE of the complexity of man's psychological nature, and his changing dispositions of mind, *religion,* as a form of worship and devotion, must ever be defined, it would seem, in different terms. At the highest level of man's being, the word *religion* (from the Latin *re-ligare,* to bind back, or to bind together) is probably synonymous with the Sanskrit term *yoga,* which means union, or oneness with God. Few individuals, perhaps, ever know or experience religion in this transcendental sense—those who do being the Christs, Buddhas and Zoroasters of all time. Few, in other words, can say *knowingly,* as Jesus no doubt did, "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30.)

For those whose consciousness is centered at the next lower level of being, "religion" may be fittingly defined perhaps as faith, feeling, or intuition. This is the realm of soul-knowledge or direct-beholding, "the wisdom that is from above," spoken of in the New Testament, which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." (St. James 3:15-17.) However weak and inarticulate these soul perceptions may be, it is they upon which the heart of man is fed, and by which the great mass of human beings live.

At the still lower level of being—in the mind—which is concerned almost exclusively with ideas, teachings and beliefs, religion is likely to degenerate, to become sterile, sectarian and doctrinaire. For it is here, in the mind, that man seeks to rationalize his opinions and to confirm his cherished ideals. It is here that he strives to reconcile the irreconcilable, so to say, to make the metaphysical and spiritual fit in with, and conform to, the physical and concrete.

In its lowest, most material form, that symbolized perhaps by the Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus' time and by orthodoxy in

every age, religion is ritualism, pure and simple—the belief in some men's minds that by merely going to church on Sunday, by sitting in the best pews, by being seen in prayer by the populace, and by contributing to church appeals, they are thereby treading the royal high-road to heaven. When confronted with the question of why it is that present-day Theosophy is almost completely devoid of ritualism, Wm. Q. Judge, one of the founders of the Theosophical Society, made the reply that the Theosophist's duty is to first wear the "yellow robe" *internally*—the "yellow robe," as everyone no doubt knows, being the garment worn by Buddhist monks and bhikshus (disciples) to denote holiness and purity.

Working with these four forms or degrees of religious expression, we find that it is the *mind,* as says H. P. Blavatsky, which is "the great slayer of the Real." "Let the Disciple slay the slayer," she says, for it is here in the rationalizing nature, the lower Manas, that man tends to go astray, and runs the risk of losing his foothold on the path of spiritual knowledge. For although Manas, or Mind, possesses the *power to know*—and rightfully should know—yet, unless rooted in morality, in the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount, or their equivalent in every scripture, intellect is almost certain to transform living spiritual intuitions into lifeless dogmas or beliefs. It is an old, old truism that "the letter killeth," and religious instructors in all ages have warned against the tendency to materialize that which is sacred and holy.

> Heaven's dew-drop, glittering in the morn's first sunbeam within the bosom of the lotus, when dropped on earth becomes a piece of clay; behold, the pearl is now a speck of mire. (H. P. Blavatsky.)

One of the most confused impartations in religious lore, it may well be, reaches us by the phrase "the fear of God." Does this phrase, especially the term "fear" as there used, really convey the idea intended by the ancients? Is it possible that the translators missed or perverted the real esoteric meaning, so that by repeating the words without understanding the thought, we merely walk over dead men's graves? However this may be, and whatever the *idea* intended may have been, there can be little doubt, from the manner and frequency with which the phrase was used, that the devout religious life in the days of the prophets was considered hardly possible without it.

Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord. (Psalms 128: 1.)

Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. (Proverbs 23: 17.)

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. (Eccl. 12: 13.)

What did Solomon mean by these admonitions? Did he intend, as do the unthinking multitudes of our day who use the phrase in a somewhat vulgar and irreverent fashion, to throw the fear of God into his people? Was it his purpose to threaten the faithful, to provide priests and preachers with a lever by which to coerce questioning minds into compliance? Is it possible that the Son of David wanted us to understand that God, as a personal, vengeful Being, with a rod of punishment in his hand, will tolerate no attempts on the part of men to think for themselves, or to practice self-reliance? We hardly think so. Yet, judging by the effects the phrase has exerted upon the mind of the race, one would be inclined to believe that Solomon meant all these things—and even more.

One of the dominant psychological attitudes of the Judeo-Christian temperament, it seems fair to say, is that of fear. But is it "fear of God," which in its true meaning would probably be something *internal* and sacred, and which would make men strong and courageous—or is it fear of *externals,* a fear which leaves us weak and cowardly? Is the fear that dominates the minds and hearts of the people of our time, fear of violating God's commandments, something most of us do each and every day of our lives, or is it fear of public opinion, fear of what other people may think or say if we take a stand on principles, or adopt a course of action opposed to that of the crowd? The fear that rules the lives of most men today, unfortunately, seems not to be fear of God, or of violating his commands, but fear of one's neighbors and of other nations, fear of church and synagogue, fear of priest, preacher and rabbi, and fear to even so much as look at a religious scripture belonging to other peoples, lest we might be guilty of seeing in them something of inspiration and beauty. It is the fear to think and act for one's self, as did Jesus, Luther, Emerson and Paine. And this lower manasic fear—the psychological heritage of the misunderstood Biblical tradition—is the tarnish that has injured Christianity, and made of Christian nations the most fear-ridden, security-minded, people on the face of the earth today.

If by "fear of God" the prophets of old meant to imply that men should fear to think for themselves, or to question holy writ, how then account for the fact that Jesus, who of all men must have known the Law, exhibited no apparent trepidation when he questioned and even refuted basic doctrines of the Old Testament. If by "fear of God" they meant to say that men should be afraid to disagree with their priests, or to question the dogmas of established religion, how explain the fact that Origen and Synesius, two of the noblest and most learned of the early Church Fathers evinced no fright or misgiving, apparently, when they disagreed with the authorities of their day, and asserted religious tenets diametrically opposed to those of the Church—the doctrine of the pre-existence of the Soul, for example, and of reincarnation? Martin Luther, devoted monk of the Order of St. Augustine, must have been acquainted with the statement in the Bible that "the fear of God leads to life." How is it, if this meant to fear the Church, that he was not afraid to post his ninety-five theses, much to the displeasure of the Pope, upon the Church door at Wittenberg? If the admonition to "fear God" meant that one should fear to investigate so-called "heathen" scriptures, how explain the fact that Ralph Waldo Emerson, Unitarian minister of the Gospel, and one of the most elevated minds of his age, possessed the courage, not only to study oriental scriptures, but to renounce his chair in the pulpit and to become, along with Thoreau, Alcott and others, the West's interpreter of Buddha, Krishna and the Greeks? Solomon's statement that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," seems to suggest something far more noble than all these things, something single, unitary and uplifting—a fear quite different from the countless forms of law and debilitating anxieties that rule the minds and hearts of people today.

One of the first questions the sincere Christian will probably wish to ask himself is; What did Jesus have to say about the *fear of God?* Is there any evidence that he himself subscribed to the doctrine or enjoined the practice to others? *At no place in the four Gospels did Jesus ever advocate fear of God!* When the Pharisee lawyer, in his scheme to test the Master, said: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"—Jesus did not reply, as one would think he might, in the words of Solomon that the conclusion of the whole matter is to "Fear God, and keep his commandments." Quite the contrary:

> Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt *love* [not fear] the Lord thy God with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. (Matt. 22: 36.)

In the *Oxford Cyclopedic Concordance,* under the term *fear,* Jesus is reputed to have advocated fear of God on one occasion, in Luke 12:4-5, where he said: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." The stern tone of these verses, warning against "him" who, after killing the body might cast into hell, is hardly characteristic, would we think, of Jesus' usual references to his Father in Heaven? Careful examination of the whole of Chapters 11 and 12, just preceding the above quotation, would seem to suggest that it is God *in contrast*—whom Jesus would have us fear —in contrast to fear of the Pharisees, with their threats of a temporal nature, whom the Master had just been upbraiding.

The Pharisees, said Jesus, were the real "soul-killers," and had the power to "cast into hell." Turn to Matt. 23:13 and 15, where Jesus says: "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in . . . ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him *twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.*" (Our italics.)

The more one studies the Gospels and compares their teaching with the unchanging Wisdom of *The Secret Doctrine,* the more convinced he is likely to become that the living, vibrant philosophy of Jesus had little in common with the already decaying system of the Jews. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old times," thus-and-so, "but I say unto you" the opposite. Instead of the *outside,* personal Deity of first century Judaism, Jesus taught the Father *within.* Instead of outward public prayer, he both practiced and advocated *prayer in secret.* In the place of retaliation, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," he taught, as Buddha did five hundred years before him, that one should love his enemies and render only good for evil. Instead of salvation by works—that is, the belief that one can achieve alone, or lift one's self solely by one's own personal bootstraps—he taught, again as did both Buddha and Krishna, *the*

doctrine of grace.[1] And now, in this study, it is seen that instead of advocating *fear of God,* as the first and highest duty of man, he constantly admonished *love.*

Jesus, in one of his functions, appears to have been a Reformer, or an Adjuster, as all spiritual gurus (or teachers) in the Orient are said to be. And one of the primary objects of his mission, it may well be, was to replace the then dominant attitude of fear, which "kills the will and stays all action," with a philosophy of peace, brotherhood and *love.* Does not the difference in tone and character of the two Testaments themselves suggest as much? According to Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible,* the term *love* occurs in the Old Testament, which has 807 pages, only 131 times, while in the New Testament, with one-third the number of pages, it occurs 175 times—a ratio of better than four to one! With the term *fear,* however, the predominance is far greater in the Old Testament, where it occurs 316 times as compared with only 80 times in the New. How account for this wide divergence of emphasis in the two books? Is it possible that under the aegis of the lower human mind, Solomon's golden words on *fear* had already turned, as early as the time of Christ, into sounding brass—and that Jesus, seeing the extreme to which the mind of his day had swung, sought to bring it back to balance?

The great fraternity of Perfected Men, of which Jesus is held to be a member, is said to watch over the progress of the less progressed. The work of this Fraternity is that of warning, guiding and adjusting the mind of mankind—and as cyclic law permits, of providing teachings suited to the needs of the time. Gautama Buddha, member of this same Fraternity, never considered himself to be anything other than a Teacher or a Guide—an *adjuster,* that is to say, of the minds and hearts of his people. More and more recognized in the West as one of the great psychologists of all time, Buddha taught that

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[1] Compare Christ's promise in Matt. 11:28—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and also St. Paul's statement in Col. 3:3, that "your life is hid with Christ in God," with Krishna's words in the eighteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjuna, the Master—*Iswara*—who by his magic power causeth all things and creatures to revolve mounted upon the universal wheel of time. Take sanctuary with him alone, O Son of Bharata, with all thy soul; by his grace thou shalt obtain supreme happiness, the eternal place." A later installment in the series on Misunderstood Biblical Traditions, it is hoped, will consider the subject of *salvation.*

man, being a god incarnate, cannot be "told" truth, but must think and discriminate and know for himself.

> They who fear when there is no cause for fear, as well as they who do not fear when they ought to fear—both enter the downward path, following false doctrines. (*Dhammapada.*)

PLOTINUS ON ILLUMINATION

Knowledge has three degrees—opinion, science, illumination. The means or instruments of the first is sense; of the second—dialectic, of the third—intuition. To the last I subordinate reason. It is absolute knowledge founded on the identity of the mind knowing with the object known. . . .

You ask how can we know the Infinite? I answer, not by reason. It is the office of reason to distinguish and define. The Infinite, therefore, cannot be ranked among its objects. You can only apprehend the Infinite by a faculty superior to reason, by entering into a state in which you are your finite state no longer—in which the divine essence is communicated to you. This is ecstasy. It is liberation of the mind from its finite consciousness. Like can only apprehend like; when you thus cease to be finite, you become one with the Infinite. In the reduction of your soul to its simplest self, its divine essence, you realize this union—this identity.

But this sublime condition is not of permanent duration. It is only now and then that we can enjoy this elevation (mercifully made possible for us) above the limits of the body and the world. I myself have realized it but three times as yet, and Porphyry hitherto not once. All that tends to purify and elevate the mind will assist you in this attainment, and facilitate the approach and the recurrence of these happy intervals. There are, then, different roads by which this end may be reached. The love of beauty which exalts the poet; that devotion to the one and that ascent of Science which makes the ambition of the philosopher, and that love and the prayer, by which some devout and ardent soul tends its moral purity towards perfection.

letters • questions • comment

William Q. Judge, in his article "How Should We Treat Others?" quotes a Master as saying that "the man who goes to denounce a criminal or an offender works not with nature and harmony but against both." In later comment in this same article Mr. Judge says "I have never found an insistence on my so-called rights at all necessary. They preserve themselves, and it must be true if the law of karma is the truth that no man offends against me unless I in the past have offended against him."

To many this view might seem unduly passive and utopian. Do we not owe a debt to our fellow citizens that they be protected against the predatory activities of criminals?

The key word in the above remark is "denounce." The dictionary uses "attack" and "stigmatize" as synonyms. While it seems altogether proper to inform responsible authorities of the predatory activities of another, the temptation of the lower personality is to exacerbate the gravity of an offense by attaching additional opprobrium—to condemn wholesale not only the acts but also the character and destiny of the transgressor.

The virtue of a philosophy of restraint and patience is in the value of the "second thought." If karma is a reality then we *do* deserve what comes to us. The unthinking propensity to lash back at whatever disturbs our equanimity has wrought countless woes on all levels—personal, social, international. Men have long suspected, and modern psychological studies have recently demonstrated, that anti-social acts spring from a reservoir of misunderstanding and ill-will, which themselves have a cause, in which cause our own destinies are enwrapped. In responding to an offense we have a remarkable opportunity to move in the direction of restoration of harmony and, in Mr. Judge's words, "to follow the line of action which shall result . . . in the reduction of the general sum of hate and opposition in thought or act which now darkens the world."

A couple of anecdotes are apropos here. Lincoln was once criticized for not taking a more militant and denunciatory attitude to-

ward the South during the Civil War. Even the Bible, his critic declared, speaks of the necessity of destroying God's enemies. In response Lincoln asked his critic if he could think of a better way to destroy one's enemies than by converting them into friends.

On another occasion Lincoln was taken to task for not defending his reputation and probity against the unwarranted and scurrilous attacks launched against him by various periodicals, even in the North. Lincoln's reply was that if the White House sought to defend itself against all unjust accusations, its doors would have to be closed for any other business.

Herein seems to lie a great truth. By turning the mind to fend off our attackers we automatically must divert attention from other goals. We may consciously do this with a mind to effect a temporary delay, but the ensuing embroilment often amounts to more than that.

Now, having said this, the question remains: To what extent might one try to imitate great Sages in the charity they show for weakness and faults? One cannot fail to realize that crime is a social phenomenon; the single man living on the dessert isle is not concerned with it. Apparently some cultures are more successful than others in either preventing or coping with the malaise and psychological disorientation that characterize "criminal" behavior. The Hopi have practically none of it. Neither do the inhabitants of Bali in Indonesia, if we believe the reports of travelers. Balinese and Hopi cultures have *built-in* "correctives" for anti-social acts.

Village brotherhood is a living fact, and communication among village inhabitants is both easy and natural. There is little opportunity or need for members of these societies to prepare "faces to meet the faces that they meet." The truth comes out. By contrast, the Western man has to hire a hall and organize a committee and suffer innumerable minor and major inconveniences just to be heard. The mass media are inaccessible to either the poor or the recalcitrant. Brooding over his malaise, the "criminal" feeds the fire of his discontent, which accordingly grows more intense and eventually breaks out into some openly hostile act. While not condoning the fruits of ignorance, one may very well look upon the criminal as a man simply caught, just now, in the trap of his own incomplete thinking. And he is the symptom of a broader social disease.

So while Judge's view that a person's so-called "rights" preserve themselves may seem at first unduly passive and utopian, the practice of practical "charity" has its reward.

ON FIRST ACQUAINTANCE— "THE SECRET DOCRINE"

II

WHILE avoiding the pitfalls of dogmatism or proselyting on behalf of any particular Teacher, it might be wise to keep in mind that some sort of "Spiritual Hierarchy" must indeed exist. An interesting statement in this connection is found in *The Secret Doctrine* II, 372:

> The ancients, from whom we hold these traditions, which *we accept no longer because we do not understand them now,* must have had motives . . . furnished by their greater proximity to the first ages, and which the distance that separates us from them refuses to us. . . . Plato, in his fourth book of *Laws,* says that, long before the construction of the first cities, Saturn had established on earth a certain form of government under which man was very happy . . . [by giving them] a leader, a shepherd, i.e., *a being of a species quite different from their own and of a superior nature.*

A group of beings of sameness or of similar states of consciousness need the "living catalyst" furnished by one of superior consciousness to themselves; one that can furnish them the path of *present* self-transcendence.

It may be that a Spiritual Hierarchy cannot, by its nature, be recognized by the literalistic. Like a distant mountain to the desert traveler, it offers more in the way of fruitful hypothesis than any immediately tangible result. While it may be imperative that we learn to discern and be willing to affirm the existence of a spiritual hierarchy, it may be equally imperative that we qualify our remarks in such a way that the literalistic cannot, in their hammer-like ways, smash to bits the meaning which our words are meant to convey.

During the early evolution "and before the final adjustment of the human organism—which became perfect and symmetrical only in the Fifth Race—the early Fourth Race may have been three-eyed, without having necessarily had a third eye in the middle of the brow, like the legendary Cyclops." (*S.D.* II, 294.) To those who believe that "spiritual and psychic *involution* proceeds on parallel lines with physical evolution," this statement will have nothing strange

in it, nor will the idea that after the midway point of the round when spiritual descent into matter has its final adjustment, striking a balance at the end of three-and-a-half races, a reverse process begins and spiritual evolution proceeds on parallel lines with physical involution.

A few pages earlier (II, 289 fn.), the kindred idea that spiritual evolution will see a decrease in our bodily form as well as an increase in its ethereality is cited by H.P.B. She quotes:

> Who knows what shape vehicled the Ego . . .? As physico-astral man [on the descending scale] depended on entities of the sub-human class (evolved from animal prototypes) for rebirth, so will physico-ethereal man [on the ascending scale] find among the graceful orders issuing from the *air*-plane, one or more which will be developed for his successive embodiments *when procreated forms are given*—a process which will include all mankind only very gradually. The (*pre?*) Adamic and post Adamic races were giants; their ethereal counterparts may possibly be liliputians—beauteous, luminous, diaphanous—but will assuredly be giants in mind.

Several times in *The Secret Doctrine,* H.P.B. mentions that the physiological senses, including man's sexual drive, will undergo a pralayic process of disuse as spiritual evolution proceeds; or, as Visconde de Figaniere says in the footnote quoted, "With physico-ethereal man there must be *involution* of sex."

This pralayic process, with which man himself can consciously cooperate, is discussed in some detail both in *The Voice of the Silence* and in scattered places in *The Secret Doctrine*. One important aspect seems to be man's control (or lack of it) over the contents of his mind from day to day. There is a vital difference between thoughts that "wander" into the mind and those consciously chosen. At any rate, as our evolution proceeds in a spiritual direction, it is averred that another set of senses will emerge. One of these is referred to as the "eye of Dangma":

> Dangma means a purified soul, one who has become a Jivanmukta, the highest adept, or rather a Mahatma so-called. His "opened eye" is the inner spiritual eye of the seer, and the faculty which manifests through it is not clairvoyance as ordinarily understood, i.e., the power of seeing at a distance, but rather the faculty of spiritual intuition, through which direct and certain knowledge is obtainable. (*S.D.* I, 46 fn.)

It may be that the progress of this sense in man will help him to recognize the Spiritual Hierarchy discussed in a preceding part of these notes, for surely this *hierarchy in nature,* by definition, will not be discernible by physiological senses which deal with the cloak of nature, rather than its heart or breath. To follow this line of thought a point further, we might suggest the hypothesis that among a group of men exposed to several philosophical systems containing varying degrees of truth, those who most unerringly chose the system of most validity would seem to have this sense in a more active state. Is not the ability to recognize truth of prime importance? Yet how few of us are willing to de-valuate the physiological side of our existence in order to progress in such a direction!

In our day, when "no religious symbol can escape profanation and even derision," voluntary poverty and chastity seem more a mark of insanity than of sanity; yet the politico-scientific approach of the majority and the de-materialized path of the few are simply establishing different reference points.

The lions may be winning all the battles today, yet who knows or is able to measure the evolutionary staying power of the lambs? Who shall be able to say that nation-states and armies will not be viewed some day as a sickness and a decline of *real* power—that is, the everlasting as opposed to the fleeting, in proportion as their energy becomes extroverted and immediate?

"No Earthly Prophet"

To work merely for the present constitutes, from all points of view, a betrayal of human obligations. It corresponds to the denial of an attitude which is associated with the greatest achievements of mankind, namely, the willingness to struggle and even to die for a transcendental cause. The most fundamental aspect of the human condition is that individual life cannot be considered as an end unto itself. In one form or another, all worthy men, whether they be pagans or Christians, mystics or atheists, have searched for a justification of their existence in tasks from which they could not hope to derive any earthly profit. Individual men cannot find their fulfillment except in mankind.

—Rene Dubos

YOUTH FORUM

Charity has always been considered the greatest of virtues, so great, in fact, that without it no other virtue has any real meaning. But if this is true, then why does the word "charity" seem to carry such a bad connotation nowadays?

It is probably possible to answer this question in as theoretical a way as that in which it is asked, but it might be more helpful to make an approach in a particular and practical manner. To make a concrete application of the question, for instance, one might ask what attitude to take when approached by a "beggar."

Even now that the question has been narrowed, however, it is still quite easy to give a merely theoretical answer; for the premise being that all men are on the spiritual plane united and interdependent, the natural conclusion would be that we ought to help the beggar in every way possible. Yet the reality of "helping" is extremely complex, and one may know things intellectually, but in a real situation still feel either embarrassment or confusion. What is the cause of such embarrassment? Or, put in the terms of the question, why is the impulse towards charitable actions so often hesitant and ambiguous?

The most obvious reason is the fact of distrust. People often take refuge in pretended indifference as they might behind the wall of a fortress. The beggar approaching might be carrying a knife, or, what is almost more frightening, he might be ready to "stab" us with hatred or ridicule. We don't take the chance—we just walk past with a straight face and act as if we do not see his outstretched hand.

Another possible reason for this ambivalence lies in the enormity of the world's suffering. A newspaper editor has to deal with so many cases of murder, rape, destitution, and all sorts of catastrophes, that very soon he is not affected by them. Perhaps the ordinary human mind is not (and does not wish to be) capable of responding to pain beyond a certain limit. In a lesser way, most of us have seen—walking down a Harlem street—so much misfortune that our feelings become dulled to the pain of others. And now,

seeing a beggar approaching us, we must continue to be dull, for to admit that he has a unique existence and is worthy of our sympathy implies that we must feel everyone else's sufferings as well.

This uncomfortable feeling has other roots, too, not the least of which is a subtle feeling of guilt. The ultimate basis for this sensation is mysterious and obscure, perhaps lying in the basic unity of all mankind, in the unbounded responsibility that is entailed in being human. At least, though, the sense of guilt many include feeling that we are not doing enough even if we give the man money or a meal, that we have not done our duty towards him until he has been reclaimed, not as a working cog in the enormous machinery of society, but as a human being. In addition, many people, when confronted by a wretched beggar, have a kind of sick feeling simply at having to admit this terrible human possibility—for what is visible in others must reside as potentiality in ourselves.

These seem to be some of the reasons that most people, when accosted, simply avert their eyes. But there is another reason as well, one related to our whole way of looking at life; for, ignoring the findings of modern science, most people still consider themselves the center of the universe. In a sense, one inherits this fantasy of cosmic centrality from babyhood, when one's whole tiny world was at one's beck and call; but the simple fact of incarnation, of individualization, itself invites the illusion that all things and beings revolve around one's self, instead of around the "sun," that is, the Universal Self. As long as one continues to live in this insular world of fantasy, nothing will seem ultimately real except one's own lower self. The sight of a beggar, with his expectant open hands, endangers this pleasant world of fantasy; it is a piece of reality that is hard to rationalize into illusion; and it makes one uneasy lest one be forced to admit the startling possibility of the existence of a personality other than one's own. For with this admission, one is obliged to replace fantasy with imagination, and to reach out to that other individuality, and to try to see life through his eyes.

True charity, therefore, can come only with a clarity of vision. If one really recognizes the beggar as a total human being, it seems inconceivable that one would not automatically stop to *see* him. The trouble is that one is too conscious of the space between himself and the other, too conscious of subject and object, of benefactor and recipient. And it is partly by reason of this self-consciousness that the word "charity" has a bad connotation these days. This unnatural-

ness is of course redoubled when there is a third person, or an organization, between the donor and the needy person, as H.P.B. makes clear in the *Key to Theosophy* (pp. 244-5):

> Act individually and not collectively; follow the Northern Buddhist precepts: . . . . "Never give money to the needy, or food to the priest, who begs at thy door, *through thy servants*, lest thy money should diminish gratitude, and thy food turn to gall" . . . . Therefore it is that every sovereign of all those "millions," contributed by good and would-be charitable people, falls like a burning curse instead of a blessing on the poor whom it should relieve.

But even when one is acting individually, it is vitally important *how* one acts. Some people, feeling self-conscious (perhaps for some of the reasons mentioned earlier), may toss a beggar a quarter and keep walking, without once looking the man in the eye. Others do the opposite, making a great deal of their action, like boy-scouts earning a merit badge, all the while thinking, "What a good boy am I." In either case, the emphasis is on the giver and the gift, the beggar being unseen and uncared about.

It seems, then, that individual charity can be as much a "burning curse" as collective charity, especially since it is evident that what the beggar is asking for, with his hand eternally, patiently, open, is not money at all, but recognition. He wants to be seen. But for all the quarters people will toss him, for all the handouts charitable organizations will give him, no one is willing really to look at him in the face and recognize him as a human soul.

What hampers this clear seeing more than anything else is what one might call the "good-Samaritan complex." We become so aware of ourselves as benefactors that we fail to understand that any meeting between two people must be a two-way process. We must, as Ralph Ellison once said in conversation, "try to bring as much consciousness as possible to events"—try to meet all souls frankly and sympathetically, try to live as fully as we can. In this way we can help a person without putting ourselves in the unnatural position of "doing him a favor." In this way he will be able to feel the soul-cleansing emotion of gratitude without having to grovel. In this way we do not "lower ourselves," but raise both him and ourselves to a high point of sharp, vital communication.

THE KABALISTS

TODAY the Kabala is a dual science, it is Eastern and it is Western. Both aspects, East and West, are veiled, one with exoteric Monotheism, the other with exoteric Pantheism. In the one case there is the pretended belief in one God, in the other—many gods, both assuming these masks to hide sacred truths from the profane. But the real students and philosophers whether Aryan or Semitic have never accepted the anthropomorphism of either many gods or one god as a philosophical proposition.

Nor is the Kabala per se any of the written works about it. In itself it is no series of charts and diagrams, no special volume, not even *a* system. It consists of seven systems, and these seven are always transmitted orally, from mouth to ear, from generation to generation of Initiates; under pledge of oath and never recorded in writing by anyone. There are seven methods of oral transmission which pertain, it is taught, to the universal pictorial language. "Pictorial" in this regard means any cipher or secret code, any number, symbol or other glyph that can be represented, whether objectively or subjectively. Any given esoteric work or subject is thus interpreted. We find references then to what is termed a symbolical Kabala, and the statement that students explain the real Kabala by the symbolical. For those who are able to master it, there is no need to exercise the imagination. It requires spiritual perception. The only original copy of the true Kabala, which is contained in the Chaldean Book of Numbers, pertains to and teaches about the realm of spirit, not matter.

Very few Christians understand, if they know anything at all of, the Jewish Theology. The Talmud is the darkest enigma even for most Jews, while those Hebrew scholars who do comprehend it do not boast of their knowledge. Their kabalistic books are still less understood by them; for in our days more Christian than Jewish students are engrossed in the elimination of their great truths. How much less is definitely known of the Oriental, or the universal Kabala!

NOTE.—Collated from standard Theosophical sources.

History catches glimpses of Kabalists since the eleventh century; all are familiar with the names Paracelsus, Jacob Boehme, Reuchlin, Spinoza, Newton, Roger Bacon. What then, we may ask, is a Kabalist? The strongest aspiration in man's nature is the longing to seek for the Unknown, a thirst for knowledge lying hidden below the surface and driving him on. But those so propelled toward the mystical and metaphysical world are in the minority, few are the seekers of a true higher world. By far the search seems to apply in greatest numbers to the world of the objective.

One must bear for ever in mind the impressive fable of Oedipus, and beware of the same consequences. Oedipus unriddled but one-half of the enigma offered him by the Sphinx and caused its death; the other half of the mystery avenged the death of the symbolic monster, and forced the King of Thebes to prefer blindness and exile in his despair rather than face what he did not feel himself pure enough to encounter. He unriddled the man, the form, and had forgotten God, the idea. If a man would follow in the steps of Hermetic philosophers he must prepare himself beforehand for martyrdom. He must give up personal pride and all selfish purposes, and be ready for everlasting encounters with friends and foes. He must part, once for all, with every remembrance of his earlier ideas, on all and on everything. Existing religions, knowledge, science, must rebecome a blank book for him, as in the days of his babyhood, for if he wants to succeed he must learn a new alphabet on the lap of Mother Nature, every letter of which will afford a new insight to him, every syllable and word an unexpected revelation. (The two hitherto irreconcilable foes, science and theology, will ally themselves with the ignorant masses against the modern Occultist.)

To science it will be the duty of the Kabalist to prove that from the beginning of time there was but one positive science—Occultism: that it was the mysterious lever of all intellectual forces, the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil of the allegorical paradise, from which gigantic trunk sprang in every direction boughs, branches, and twigs, the former shooting forth straight enough at first, the latter deviating with every inch of growth, assuming more and more fantastical appearances, till at last one after the other lost its vital juice, got deformed, and, drying up, finally broke off, scattering the ground afar with heaps of rubbish.

To theology the Occultist of the future will have to demonstrate that the Gods of the mythologies, the Elohim of Israel as well as the

religious and theological mysteries of Christianity, to begin with the Trinity, sprang from the sanctuaries of Memphis and Thebes; that their mother Eve is but the spiritualized Psyche of old, both of them paying a like penalty for their curiosity, descending to Hades or Hell, the latter to bring back to earth the famous Pandora's box, the former to search out and crush the head of the serpent—the symbol of time and evil, the crime of both expiated by the pagan Prometheus and the Christian Lucifer; the first delivered by Hercules, the second conquered by the Saviour.

Furthermore, the Occultist will have to prove to Christian theology, publicly, what many of its priesthood are well aware of in secret, namely, that their God on earth was a Kabalist, the meek representative of a tremendous Power, which, if misapplied, might shake the world to its foundations; and that of all their evangelical symbols, there is not one but can be traced up to its parent fount. For instance, their incarnated *Verbum* of Logos was worshipped at his birth by the three Magi led on by a star, and received from them the gold, the frankincense and myrrh—the whole of which is simply an excerpt from the Kabala our modern theologians despise, and the representation of another and still more mysterious "Ternary" embodying allegorically in its emblems the highest secrets of the Kabala.

Moses, the Egyptian Initiate, entrusted the Kabala orally but to his elect. In no country was the true esoteric doctrine trusted to writing. He could not reveal to the multitude the sublime secrets of religious speculation, nor the Cosmogony of the Universe. But the primitive and pure Oriental Gnosticism, the sublime Revelation to the early Races, was eventually corrupted and degraded completely by different subsequent sects. While Moses got his Kabalistic wisdom from Egypt, the earlier and greater Hebrew Initiates got theirs from the Chaldean Hierophants at Babylon. Thus the substratum of the Jewish Kabala is identical with the substratum of all other systems, which, whether religious or philosophical were all derived from the Eastern Secret Doctrine, which passed through India, China, Greece, Egypt and Chaldea. The Kabala known to Western mystics today is inseparable from the Hebrew Pentateuch, so-called books of Moses or first five books of the Old Testament. The latter are at best only two or three centuries older than the Christian era, the Kabala purporting to explain them having now passed through centuries of alterations and corruptions.

on the lookout

A Popular Approach to Reincarnation

Many Lives, Many Loves, by Gina Cerminara (Sloane, 1963), will undoubtedly come to the attention of most Theosophical students, for Miss Cerminara has attracted numerous readers through her book on the Edgar Cayce readings (*Many Mansions*) and has interested herself in the relationship between psychic phenomena and reincarnation for many years. The present book is a frank, somewhat breezy account of the author's opinions as to how the theory of rebirth may be incorporated into a philosophical view of the future. She calls for an open mind on this hypothesis, both from a philosophical and phenomenological point of view, and, in a closing chapter, expresses her conviction that a great deal of confusion regarding reincarnation can be eliminated by a proper attention to the disciplines of General Semantics.

Miss Cerminara does not, we believe, consider herself to be a Theosophist, but her reading in Theosophical sources is evidently considerable. She gives respectful attention to the works of H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy* being included in her list of recommended readings, and while she feels it necessary to speak out against the claim of "infallibility" for H.P.B., Miss Cerminara does not actually deride or belittle.

Notes on the Theosophical Movement

Pointing to the dangers of sectarianism, Miss Cerminara indicates why the valid propositions of Madame Blavatsky—or the original work of Edgar Cayce—can easily be obscured by the desire for a religious sort of belief. She writes:

> Far too many Cayceites and Theosophists wrap themselves complacently in their special information as in a cloak; and they thereby shut themselves in from the sun and the wind of new insights, as well as frighten away those who might otherwise be attracted to them.
>
> The fault here, as in the case of so many movements and religions, lies not with the originators, but with well-meaning but injudicious followers.

In the ranks of the Theosophical Society one can witness the phenomenon. Since its inception in 1875, there have always been intelligent members who have had the same critical temper of mind as characterizes Hugh Lynn Cayce and as characterized Mme. Blavatsky herself. But it is only to be expected that in a Society that has been in existence almost a century there should have been many hundreds of people whose willingness to believe without proof has led them into the paths of intellectual folly. In fact, anyone who is interested in making a study of credulity run rampant, due to an inadequate sense of scientific caution with regard to clairvoyant and presumed clairvoyant data, could find no better or richer field of study than the history of the Theosophical Society.

Authority versus Philosophy

Miss Cerminara continues:

Convinced of the validity of the Blavatsky clairvoyance, many Theosophists have blindly accepted the statements of other self-styled clairvoyants, both in and out of their ranks, often without any evidential substantiations whatsoever. Persuaded that Blavatsky was in touch with Masters of Wisdom (as well she might have been) they have been willing to believe almost anybody who says he is in touch with a Master. There is no wonder that Theosophists have been in ill repute for so long in academic circles; and the unfortunate thing is that the ill repute has kept away many people who might have found, and still could find, much of value in the original teachings.

Academic psychologists, then—and I include in the term psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, and all members of the various psychological professions—who take a casual look at the various esoteric societies can legitimately find much to criticize. Amongst the members they would find a tendency to credulity and a lack of discrimination; amongst the originators, a tendency to make assertions unaccompanied by proof, or unsusceptible of proof in our present stage of knowledge. In groups like the Association for Research and Enlightenment and the Theosophical Society they would not find the commercialism which marks so many offbeat societies of our times; but in many other organizations the profit motive would be exceedingly apparent, as would be self-deluded invention and even deliberate fraud.

On the other hand, if they would only take the time and trouble to take a closer look at these societies and their literature—and do so with a truly open mind—they could find there certain important values.

Some Free Lance Opinions

Miss Cerminara is critical, from the standpoint of her own specu-

lations, of various Theosophical "traditions." For example, respecting the time intervening between death and a new birth, she writes:

> The Cayce data showed that it is not uncommon for souls, even well-evolved souls, to return to incarnation in a relatively short period of time, such as a year, two years, five years, or twenty years, despite a Theosophical tradition to the contrary. Age-regression experiments have independently confirmed this, as have the spontaneous memory cases studied by Dr. Stevenson, and the work of other clairvoyants who touch on past lives.

The use of terms such as "well-evolved souls" shows that the author is not very conversant with basic Theosophical literature—since H. P. Blavatsky has indicated that the truly "well-evolved souls," or the Adepts, have no need for either the afterdeath state interval or ordinary dreaming. At this point, the Theosophist is also moved to point out the possibility that alleged "memories" of past lives may be, in fact, simply a psychic or mediumistic contact with the still active remains of *another* personality, not yet dissipated by the passage of time.

Are Animals Individuals?

Miss Cerminara's quarrel with what she terms the Theosophical view of the "group soul" for animals is largely occasioned by what may well be thought to be an oversimplification in Besant-Leadbeater writings. The author of *Many Lives, Many Loves* also feels strongly that there must be some sort of "individuality" in each animal—and a progression which is not simply that of the species. On this basis, she raises a perennial question:

> The Theosophists make a statement about animals about which I have always had serious reservations, namely, their notion of the animal "group soul." To assume that only human beings have "individuality" and animals have to attain to it seems to me to be on a par with the widespread notion of the white man that "all Chinese look alike" (matched by the Chinese notion, no doubt, that all white men look alike) and is indicative (I think) of an indiscriminating and imperfect observation of animals who, as any animal lover will tell you, have noticeably unique personalities, even at a very early age. Moreover, I find no mention of the group-soul idea in the basic Theosophical writings of Mme. Blavatsky—which, after all, have been vindicated on many other points—and I see no reason to believe it just because Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater said it was so. Both of them wrote extensively and with great positiveness on the matter, presumably on the basis of Mr. Leadbeater's clairvoyance. But any clairvoyant can be wrong and very often is, and there is good reason

to be doubtful of some of Mr. Leadbeater's clairvoyant perceptions. This is not only because they have lacked evidential substantiations but also because they have sometimes been proven completely or partially wrong.

Life and Death

On the relationship between reincarnation and contemporary thought, Miss Cerminara writes:

> A liberal Protestant minister whom I know has given a good deal of consideration to the idea of reincarnation and finally he has come to accept it. One day I asked him if he ever makes so bold as to mention the subject to his parishioners from the pulpit. "Well," he said, "only very seldom, and very cautiously. The last time I did I referred to the theory of reincarnation, compared it to the theory of hell, and let them draw their own conclusions."
>
> I have often thought of this remark and reflected that it represents a substantial step forward in the thinking of mankind. Though a minister who dared make such a statement would still meet with indignation and even dismissal in the majority of Christian churches, there was a time not so long ago when he could not have said such a thing in *any* Christian church. Disgrace and even imprisonment or death would have been his fate in an earlier age had he dared to speak of so heretical a notion as reincarnation, and, worse yet, placed it dispassionately on the same level of intellectual consideration as a dogma of the church. That was the time when anything known on the authority of the Church and Bible was not to be called in question. But times have changed drastically.
>
> There exists an ancient concept about the human soul and its destiny which in modern times has made a surprising reappearance not only in literary and philosophic works but also in experimental sessions dealing with the mind, namely, the concept of reincarnation. This is an idea about man and the universe which, unlike the heaven-hell theory has some degree of evidence to substantiate it.

Personal Credo

After an interesting survey of psychic phenomena in relation to rebirth, inclusive of the studies currently being pursued by Dr. Ian Stevenson, LSD experimentation and hypno-regression, Miss Cerminara concludes:

> The realization that each man's life, and each woman's life, with all its peculiarities and aberrations and its love relationships or the lack of them, is precisely the best situation in which this soul can work out its own life sums can give our critical tongues pause. "My life is not a spectacle but a *life*," Emerson said. It is

a wise thought, and one worth remembering both with regard to oneself and with regard to others.

The many-life hypothesis, then, clarifies much in human relationships, and through the clarification helps us to become less intolerant. It also leads to a sense of spiritual perspective and an understanding of the purpose behind all love experiences. . . .

The theory of reincarnation and the methodology of General Semantics are two proposals to the world.

They are vastly different approaches. Yet both are scientific in spirit. Both have compelling ethical consequences. Both lead to a synthesis of philosophic, scientific, psychological, and religious thought. Both constitute a bridge between the science of the West and the wisdom of the East. Both are conducive to *unity*—unity of man within himself, and unity of man with other men.

Thus both in their way can do much toward inducing a greater sanity on this mad, sad planet.

I recommend them earnestly, and urgently, to your attention.

Chemical Mysticism

A growing awareness that there are indeed "realms beyond the senses" inevitably produces, in our culture, an urge to sample them. This, in degree, may be considered part of the appeal of hypnotism, and certainly the current furor over the use of LSD (lysergic acid) as an aid to psychic transformation indicates that psychologists in increasing numbers will also be experimenting with magic mushrooms, mescaline, etc.

Reports of results of LSD dosages are conflicting. One psychologist, Dr. Timothy Leary of Harvard, is extravagant in his hopes for LSD as a means of curing sick minds and improving healthy ones. According to the report of an interview with Dr. Leary by Harry Nelson, Los Angeles *Times* Medical Editor (April 17): "Dr. Leary believes in the ability of certain drugs to free men's minds. Confident that drugs such as LSD-25, psilocybin and mescaline can increase brain function to levels previously achieved by only a few, he said he is gambling his professional reputation on this conviction."

"Insight-giving Property"

Mr. Nelson's report continues:

Leary believes that the "consciousness expanding" capacity of the drugs will enable man to see himself and the universe in a new light and to make superior mental achievement.

Countering the charges by the medical profession and others

that the drugs are dangerous, Dr. Leary said there is no scientific evidence that they present either a physical or emotional hazard.

He cited studies showing that the insight-giving property of the drugs has helped alcoholics overcome their habit, addicts to give up narcotics and hardened criminals to gain a more socially desirable attitude. In addition, the power of concentration and increased brain function afforded by the drugs have given so-called normal persons a perspective akin to a religious experience, he said.

Against Its Use

The Council of the Southern California Psychiatric Society, in a statement "Concerning the Use of Lysergic Acid Diethylamide," issued the following warning:

LSD, as an adjunct to psychotherapy, has been hailed in sensational terms as a new miracle drug. . . . We question whether the serious dangers and unproven effectiveness of this drug have been sufficiently publicized. . . . The medical and scientific literature indicate, and our consultants in psychopharmacology believe, that as yet there is no reliable proof that Lysergic Acid Diethylamide is a reliable adjunct in psychotherapy. We are of the opinion that the enthusiasm of some for the effectiveness of this drug is unwarranted at this time and should be questioned.

The Dean of Harvard College issued the following statement to undergraduates:

It has come to our attention that a number of undergraduates are becoming interested in the effects of LSD, psilocybin, mescaline, and other mind-distorting drugs. . . . It is important to warn undergraduates that the ingestion of these drugs may result in serious hazard to the mental health and stability even of apparently normal persons. The drugs have been known to intensify seriously a tendency toward depression and to produce other dangerous psychotic effects.

A Psychiatrist's Warning

According to the present editor of the American Medical Association's Archives of General Psychiatry (New York *Times,* June 4), "the potent hallucination-producing drug, originally introduced to study mental processes, has now reached a dangerous stage of indiscriminate over-use." Dr. Roy R. Grinker continues to list the "deleterious effects" of LSD:

Latent psychotics are disintegrating under the influence of even a single dose; long-continued LSD experiences are subtly

creating a psychopathology. Psychic addiction is being developed and the lay public is looking for psychiatrists who specialize in its administration.

Here again is the story of evil results from the ill-advised use of a potentially valuable drug, due to unjustified claims, indiscriminate and premature publicity, and the lack of proper professional controls.

A Very Tricky Chemical

The New York *Times* writer, Emma Harrison, gives prominent mention to other internal disabilities which may follow massive doses of LSD:

Also published in the journal's May issue was a report by two investigators of the drug, Drs. Sidney Cohen and Keith S. Ditman of Los Angeles.

They reported on adverse reactions, such as prolonged psychotic reactions, severe depressive and anxiety states, or "intensified sociopathic behavior" when the drug was not administered under proper medical control. The two researchers have previously reported on reactions of the drug and on the existence of a black market in its sale for nonmedical and nonresearch uses.

In his editorial Dr. Grinker said that the concept that LSD produced a "model psychosis" was not validated in research. It was then, he said, used, as other mood-changing drugs are, as an adjunct to psychotherapy, "presumably loosening defenses and facilitating 'insight'."

Possible Plunge into Psychism

A feature article in the *Saturday Review* (June 1) gives a detailed account of Harry Asher's experiences with LSD. Mr. Asher volunteered as a subject, and after a heightening of all sense impressions he experienced a number of rather terrifying and prolonged reactions—hence his title "They Split My Personality." In Mr. Asher's case, LSD seemed to produce a genuine, if comparatively short-termed, schizophrenia, and even after the worst of this was over, it took a long time for the subject to "pull himself together":

I was in bed for a few days and, when not babbling or crying, I lay very limp and completely apathetic. I must try to convey why I made no attempt to get up and generally pull myself together, because the reason was interesting and important. I saw my own mind divided somewhat in the way that Freud sees it, divided into parts having different functions at different levels. As in his scheme, the different functions and different levels were represented as having different positions in the diagram. In this

case the diagram was not drawn, but was thought of as being in the head. Now one part of this diagram was "will power." It was rather low down, and lines went vaguely from it to other parts of the brain which represented different channels through which the will power could exert its effects.

I could see quite clearly in the diagram that this drug had paralysed the "will power" section. I can remember saying, "I'm prepared to do battle against the ordinary afflictions, but hell!—I've nothing left to do battle *with*. This drug has cut me off at the source. It's completely knocked out the *will power*."

After a fortnight I was still very jumpy and susceptible to illusions. In the bathroom, I would see pictures made from the irregular condensation of steam on the walls.

After one takes into account this negative and frightening testimony, it is still necessary to understand why LSD and other brain-chemicals claim the attention of reputable men in the psychiatric field. The lead article in *Psychiatry* for May, by Dr. Sanford M. Unger, issuing from the National Institute of Mental Health, helps to provide such an explanation, and is otherwise worthy of separate study.

"After Death" Speculation

John Langdon-Davies' *On the Nature of Man* (Mentor, 1961) provides an interesting example of current attempts to approach the question of "survival" by means of science and logic. Mr. Davies, an Englishman of some reputation as a writer, is principally concerned with the field of ESP—hypnosis, telepathy, faith healing, mediumship, and psycho-perception. While this author gives no indication of a serious interest in the philosophy of reincarnation, and approaches the whole area of metaphysics from a phenomenological point of view, he is extraordinarily lucid in his criticism of "wish fulfillment" survival theories as illustrated by many spiritualist beliefs. Under the heading, "Survival Is An Open Question," Mr. Davies writes:

There are no compelling reasons for or against a belief in survival, and so we must pass to the field of scientific research proper. . . . If evidence could be found for a future life, it would be quite impossible to find evidence as to whether its duration would be only as long as this life or longer, or infinitely longer.

Persistence, on the other hand, is something that we know exists physically at least. The body persists after death; does the mind persist apart from and in a way different from the body? If we find facts suggesting that something mental continues after death, but not a complete mind or a personality, we might call

this persistence, and retain the word survival for the continuance of the individual consciousness.

The Illogic of "Personal" Identity

Many of Mr. Davies' passages illustrate a remark of H. P. Blavatsky's which appeared in a *Lucifer* editorial: "The conclusions or deductions of a philosophical writer may be entirely opposed to our views and the teachings we expound; yet, his premises and statements of facts may be quite correct." For Davies, with a clarity which many Theosophical students might emulate, explains one of the subtleties involved in any argument concerning the survival of the soul:

> If something, a psychic factor, a portion of mind-stuff released from temporary contact with an individual brain, an etheric body, a bodiless soul—call it what you will—survives, this is a long way from having evidence of true personal survival. Indeed, at present it would probably be correct to say that such evidence as we have suggests that most of what we call personality is so attached to patently evanescent things that its survival when these have vanished is hard or indeed impossible to conceive. It has been well observed that if nothing but a wife's sterling qualities or immortal part untouched by transient things were to survive few husbands would be able, or indeed would wish to recognize it or her.

A Significant Conclusion

The last page of Langdon-Davies' *On the Nature of Man* indicates a basic open-mindedness on the part of the author, plus a corresponding gift for prophecy:

> We may be on firmer ground for the next stage of our inquiry if we humbly accept the fact that Oriental psychology may well be in advance of our own in these matters. It may be that the one thing that cannot survive is personality and that our salvation lies in this very fact. But one thing at least is certain: the facts, little as we may understand them, give no grounds for supposing that nothing survives death.
>
> It may be that the assertion which is usually so hypocritically made, that death makes no difference, is true; that at least we exaggerate its effect as far as certain mental things are concerned, largely because the things obviously affected by death seem so overwhelmingly important to all of us.
>
> These questions may one day be answered. We have not yet reached that stage in our growing knowledge. We have, however, reached a stage where it is no longer possible to ignore well-observed facts. Indeed, it is doubtful if the mere accumulation

of more facts will contribute much of value, except as revelatory experience to the individual. What we want, and entirely lack, is a theory which fits the facts into the sum total of our knowledge of life and the universe.

Drop in Church Membership Analyzed

Dr. Reinhold Neibuhr recently commented on the current decline in church membership (Los Angeles *Times,* April 7). While minimizing the decline, he noted that "it is the first reversal of the phenomenon of rising church affiliation in this country." One can only "guess" at the causes for the slowdown, he said.

It was to be expected that there would be an increase of church membership after two world wars and the beginning of the nuclear era. As he puts it: "The traditional religious answers, discarded by the previous centuries, had a new lease on life and plausibility." It comes as a shock to the church that, at the time of "civilization's gravest danger," its membership is decreasing.

Tentative Answers

Dr. Niebuhr speculates as follows:

> Perhaps the traditional religious answers were not obviously more relevant than the optimism of the secular surrogates. Although the discerning Christian would say that they are when understood in their full sweep. Perhaps different forms of communities have arisen as centers of our converging cultures and values—which were once harbored in the church. Perhaps the immediate urgencies, anxieties and responsibilities of the times themselves have pre-empted the attention of the population.

Yet should not urgencies and anxieties draw the attention of the population to the church? If the church is indeed repository of that divine wisdom which "reconciles all religions, sects and nations under a common system of ethics, based on eternal verities," surely it would be sought at times like these just as a child seeks its parents when in trouble.

The Quandary of the Church

The article concludes with this strange observation:

> Whatever may be the cause, and for that matter the dimension, of the interruption in the upsurge of the religious index in America, our nation is obviously not as exceptional in that respect as we had presumed it to be. It is a part of Western European culture, and that culture is a curious amalgam of Hebraic, Christian and secular forces.

What seems implied is that America is subject to the same weaknesses as the Christian European countries because our culture, like theirs, "is a curious amalgam of Hebraic, Christian and secular forces." There is a tacit admission of failure here in the very fact that the religious efforts have not been successful in combatting "secular forces."

The Only Cure

If the horizon of the church could be widened to include other cultures besides those founded upon the Hebraic-Christian tradition; if it would embrace the fundamental religious and philosophic teachings of the ancients, "its full dimensions would be realized," and it could "square up to universal religious demands" in *every* situation, not only "the crucial ones, such as the race issue." A basis for that Universal Brotherhood taught by every Messenger to mankind would be established; there would be no need to worry about church attendance because all men would recognize in their hearts that divine spark which animates all beings, regardless of race.

Effective Foreign Aid

No epoch in recorded history has been wholly free of ugly episodes in the treatment of minority groups. Unfortunately, our present era furnishes several examples. But we must now note one of these groups whose constructive attitude has changed its role from that of victim to one of Good Samaritan. In a dispatch from Washington, reported in the Los Angeles *Times,* we are informed that Israel is sending aid to other countries. Dan Kurzman states:

> Israel, which has been giving technical assistance to about 80 Afro-Asian countries, is now extending its aid arm into Latin America. In cooperation with the Organization of American States, this nation of 2 million people plans to train in Israel about 200 Latin American students in agricultural techniques suitable to their countries.
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> And under bilateral arrangements, Israeli technicians are being sent to Latin nations to work on pilot projects that could lead to reclamation of vast arid areas of the continent.

From Tel Aviv comes a report by Tom Stacey (Los Angeles *Times,* March 10) outlining the emergence of what he calls "the third ideology," the first having been "communism," which was followed by the Western one. "The third, which has appeared since independence, is the Israeli one."